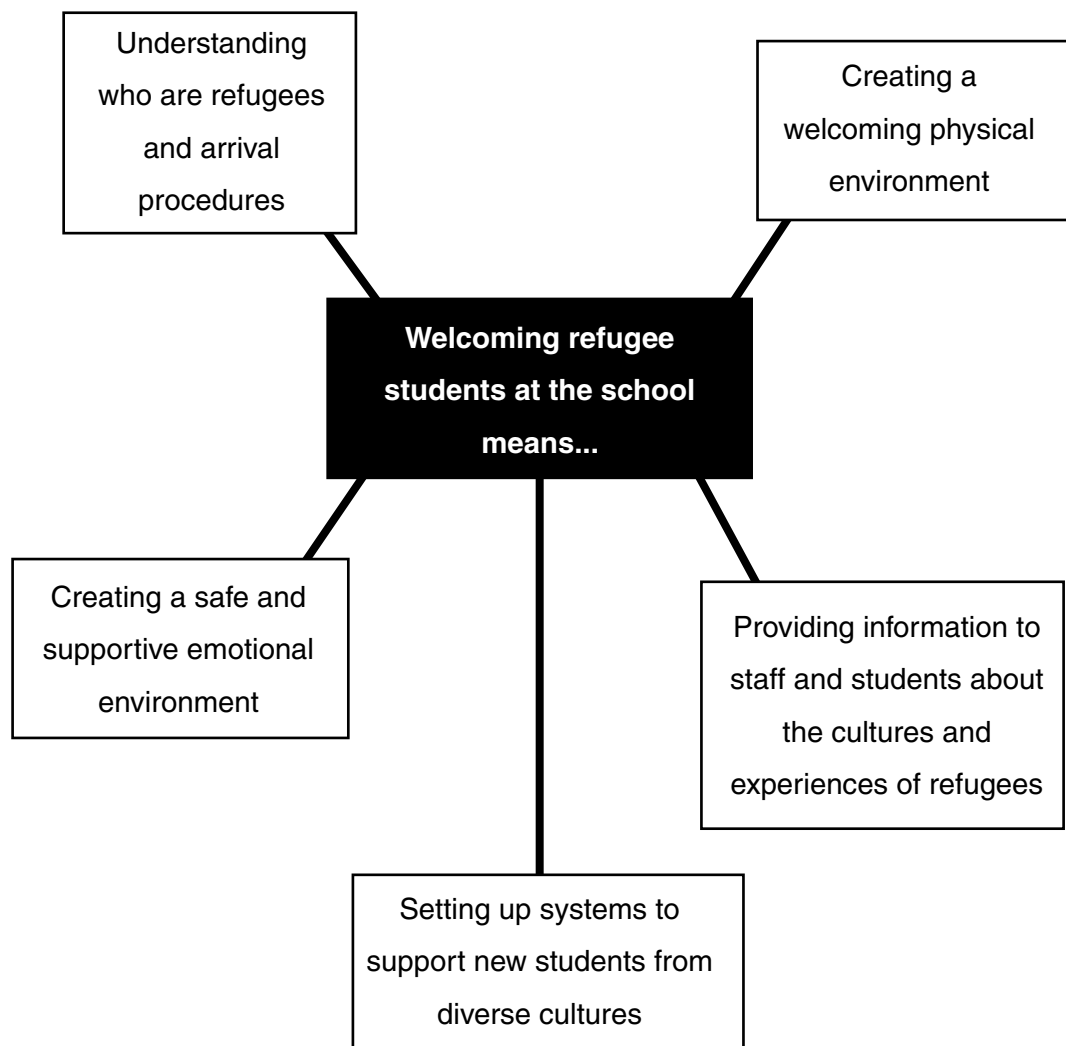
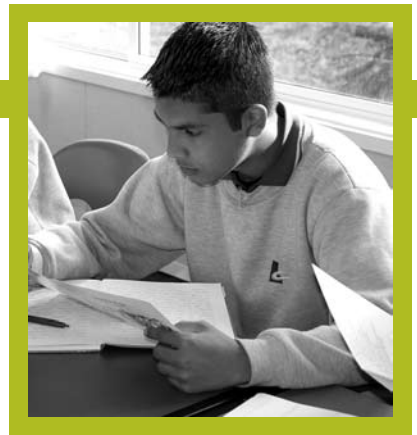
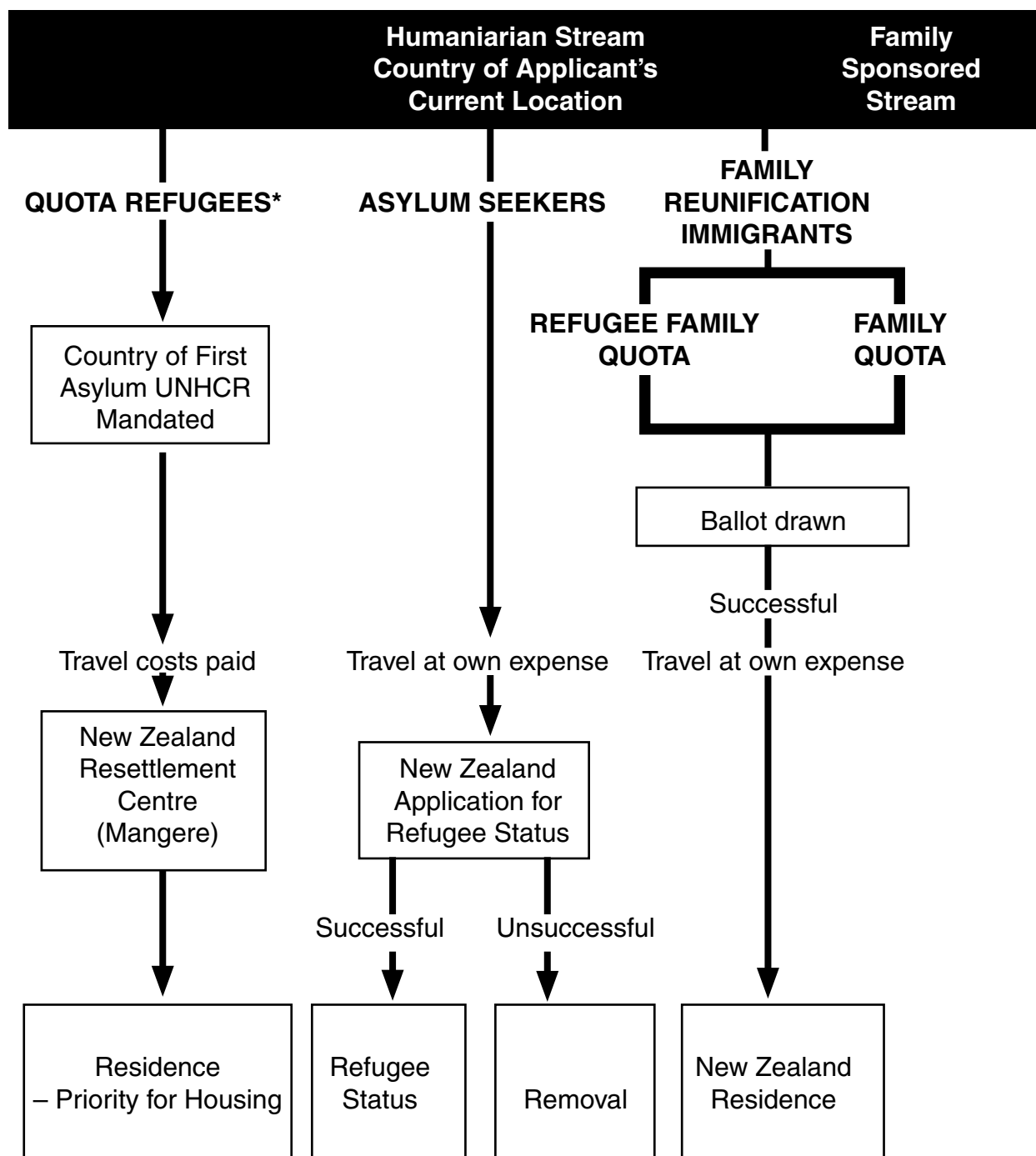


Section 1: Preparing the school to welcome refugees



THE REFUGEE JOURNEY



- A proportion of Quota Refugees is through Family Reunification. Declared spouses and dependent children of resettled refugees do not need to have recognised refugee status to be considered for reunification under the Refugee Quota Programme.

Who is a refugee?

The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as *any person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and..... is unable, or owing to such fear is unwilling to return to it.* Those who the United High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) accepts as being in such a position are granted refugee status.

Refugee categories in New Zealand

Refugees arrive in New Zealand belonging to any of three categories:

quota refugees

- have left their country of origin and been waiting in a country of *first asylum* (typically in a refugee camp) for permanent resettlement in one of approximately ten receiving countries
- are granted refugee status by UNHCR prior to arrival
- are accepted by New Zealand at a rate of 750 per annum and become Permanent Residents on arrival. Further numbers of “**family sponsored quota**” will also be accepted from time to time at the discretion of the Minister of Immigration.

asylum seekers or “spontaneous” refugees

- make their way to New Zealand independently, without UNHCR mandate, and claim refugee status on arrival
- are typically detained, either at a detention centre, in holding cells or sometimes in prison, while formal applications for asylum are completed
- if accepted as genuine applicants, are released with an entitlement to receive “protection” in New Zealand during the legal process of proving the validity of their case – a protracted exercise sometimes taking two to three years
- receive emergency unemployment benefit and legal aid during this time, along with a 6-monthly renewable work permit but are unable to access a number of social services
- have access to education for children
 - for adults this may occur haphazardly at the discretion of individual institutions
 - children are entitled to attend school and be assessed for ESOL funding
- are repatriated if applications or subsequent appeals for refugee status are unsuccessful (as indeed are the majority).

international/family reunification immigrants

- may be sponsored by resettled refugees from quota or asylum seeker categories
- come from refugee-like backgrounds

Quota refugees - on arrival in New Zealand

- Quota refugees received at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre for a 6-week residential education/orientation programme.
- Services are provided at the multi-agency Centre by the Ministries of Health, Immigration and Education as well as Refugees as Survivors and the Refugee and Migrant Service.
- The education programme, delivered by the Auckland University of Technology, includes early childhood education, primary and secondary classes, and English classes for adults as well as orientation to New Zealand taught in mother tongue.

The refugee legacy

Pre-arrival

- Though refugees come from diverse cultures, all arrive carrying a burden of loss (often sudden) of home, friends, immediate family members, familiar environment, and a sense of safety.
- Some have suffered the additional trauma of torture.
- Unlike voluntary migrants, the choice of refugees to leave the homeland has been negative rather than positive - the involuntary nature of the experience pervades all subsequent aspects of resettlement.

Post-arrival

- On departure from the Refugee Resettlement Centre, the realities and responsibilities of resettlement in a new culture must be faced. This process may be no less traumatic than that endured during the war or in refugee camps.
- Pressures of coping with unfamiliar social norms, and practices, English language, housing, budgeting, transport and bureaucratic systems weigh heavily on those still fragile from past trauma.
- Unfamiliar environment impacts on family dynamics - may lead to family/individual dysfunction.

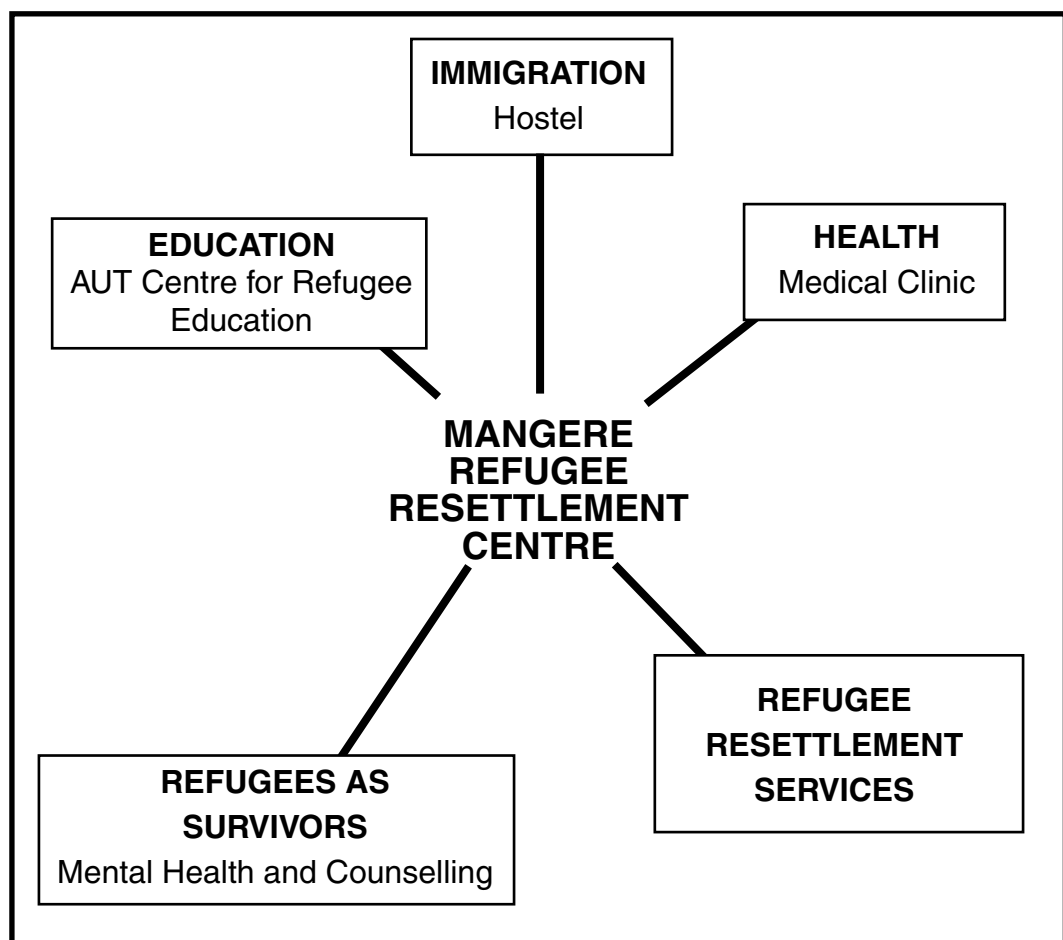
Children

- Primary and secondary schools in New Zealand are likely to present a radically different style of education than that experienced in the home country.
- Past education is typically seriously disrupted and for many children there has been no formal education at all prior to that at the Centre for Refugee Education.
- Bridging the gap is a challenging task for most children to accomplish requiring expert support and assistance.

Primary and secondary classes at the Centre for Refugee Education replicate the methods, routines and organisation of mainstream New Zealand classes while encouraging children to further develop positive attributes from their own cultural backgrounds. Wherever possible, bilingual teachers and tutors support the students. Reports are written for each student to assist subsequent schools/teachers.

It is important to remember that family reunification refugees and asylum seekers generally have not had any access to this orientation and initial support because they do not go through the Mangere Resettlement Centre. It is therefore very important for schools to identify them as refugees on enrolment, so they can get support from this point onwards.

Quota refugees - on arrival services



How can schools increase the chances of educational success for students from refugee backgrounds?

There are many different processes and procedures that schools can follow in order to increase the chances of successful adjustment and learning for students from refugee backgrounds. The remainder of this section and the rest of this handbook offer advice and suggestions to assist schools in meeting the needs of these students.

Welcoming new students

Investing time in developing good procedures for welcoming all new arrivals is certainly cost effective as it helps to prevent problems and difficulties. It is especially important for students from a refugee background who have often had interrupted schooling or come from countries where the education system is very different. The following checklist may be useful in thinking about the process involved.

The school environment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the school foyer, office and administration block demonstrate that the school values cultural diversity? 	Are there signs, displays, artwork from a range of cultures and different languages?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is the first contact person they see? 	Has this person been trained in dealing effectively with people from a range of cultures?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are parents and new students shown around the school? 	Who could you use to do this? What are the key areas to show them?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the school use trained interpreters? 	Parents and community members can be trained at local polytechnics.

The staff

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have all staff had professional development in cross-cultural issues? 	<p>Some possible topics are:</p> <p>Pronunciation of names in different language groups</p> <p>Customs and educational background</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a Dean/liaison teacher been appointed with special responsibility for students from a refugee background? 	<p>The Dean/Liaison teacher needs a time allowance because interviewing assessing, placing, and providing on-going support for students from a refugee background is a time consuming process. Refugee families need to meet with school staff 2 or 3 times to cement a relationship and ensure on-going communication.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are all teachers informed about a new student arriving? 	<p>What would be the best way to do this?</p> <p>What information do teachers need?</p>
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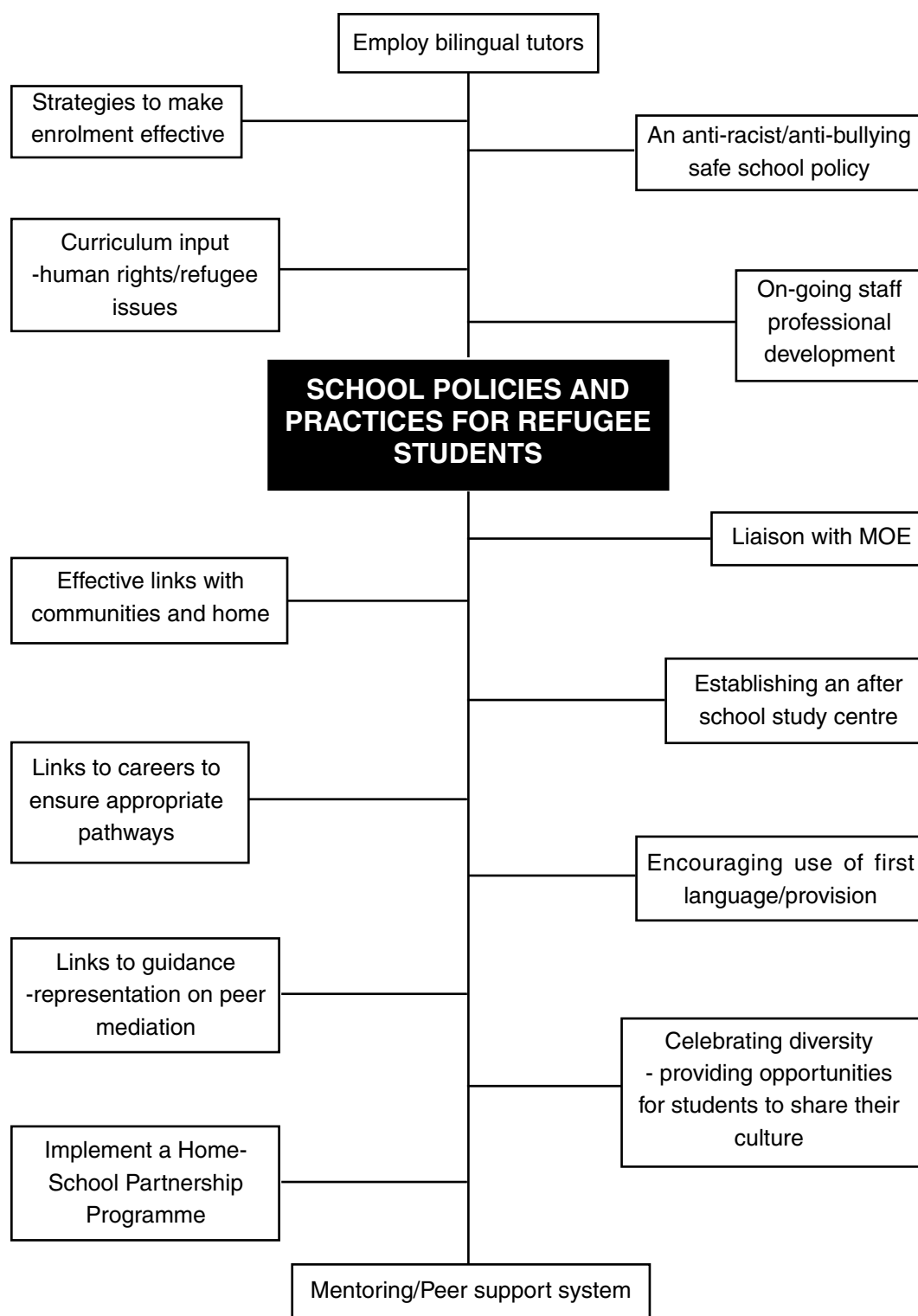
The students

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do students receive a welcome pack? 	<p>What needs to be in the welcome pack?</p> <p>Is the language able to be understood by students and families with little English?</p> <p>Could include map, a school calendar, a current newsletter, school timetable and routines with events and prospectus</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a buddy system for new students? 	<p>Buddies need to be carefully briefed for the job. Some of the information they need to pass on includes the following:</p> <p>where to go each period / change of classroom</p> <p>where the toilets are</p> <p>what to do at interval and lunch</p> <p>explaining instructions</p> <p>introducing them to each new teacher</p>

New to New Zealand (available from Learning Media) is an introduction to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of many different groups of students in New Zealand schools.

School policies and practices for students from a refugee background

A first step is to develop a school policy that includes creative approaches to support students from a refugee background' learning and self esteem. One school developed a plan based on the following objectives:



Safe school policies

All schools have developed their own policies and procedures in this area but schools with numbers of students from a refugee background have experienced specific difficulties that they have sought solutions for.

One model that works well with students from a refugee background is an anti-harassment team using peer mediation. A representative range of students are trained in peer mediation techniques. They are then used to help students who are experiencing difficulties with racism or bullying.

Many schools have found it helpful to have workshops that enable students to share experiences in a non-threatening situation and hear suggestions on ways to respond to racism.

In the professional development that staff are given on safe school policies there needs to be a component on how to deal specifically with issues related to refugees including information on their countries, their educational experience and family structures.

Some schools have found it helpful to give students from a refugee background an opportunity to tell their stories. When this has been done, for example in special assemblies or in class in a social studies or health unit, it has resulted in a higher degree of understanding and tolerance from students.

Home School Partnerships can foster student achievement by assisting schools and families to communicate and engage successfully.

For more information on how to develop safe school policies which recognise the needs of students from refugee backgrounds, contact the Refugee Education Co-ordinator in your local area.

**For more information on Literacy and Numeracy Home-School Partnership programmes, contact your local School Support Services and access the tki website.
http://www.tki.org.nz/r/literacy_numeracy/**

Ethnic boxes

An ethnic box is a resource pack or box containing information and items that relate specifically to one ethnic or language group. The boxes are particularly important to use with students from a refugee background who often arrive with feelings of dislocation and unfamiliarity. It helps to demonstrate that their culture is valued and accepted and is often a starting point for building on what is familiar and known.

An ethnic box could contain some of the following:

- maps of the country, the region and the world
- large pictures, postcards and photographs of the country, people and activities
- charts with greetings in the first language and in English
- flashcards with phrases and expressions in both languages
- bilingual dictionaries and books
- resources and materials in the first language (books, comics, newspapers etc.)
- objects and artefacts from the country (hats, mats, beads, cloth, money etc.)

Materials can be obtained from:

Newspaper and magazine cuttings on refugee experiences (cut out and laminated)

Organisations such as UNHCR, World Vision, Unicef, Red Cross

National Geographic magazines

Embassies

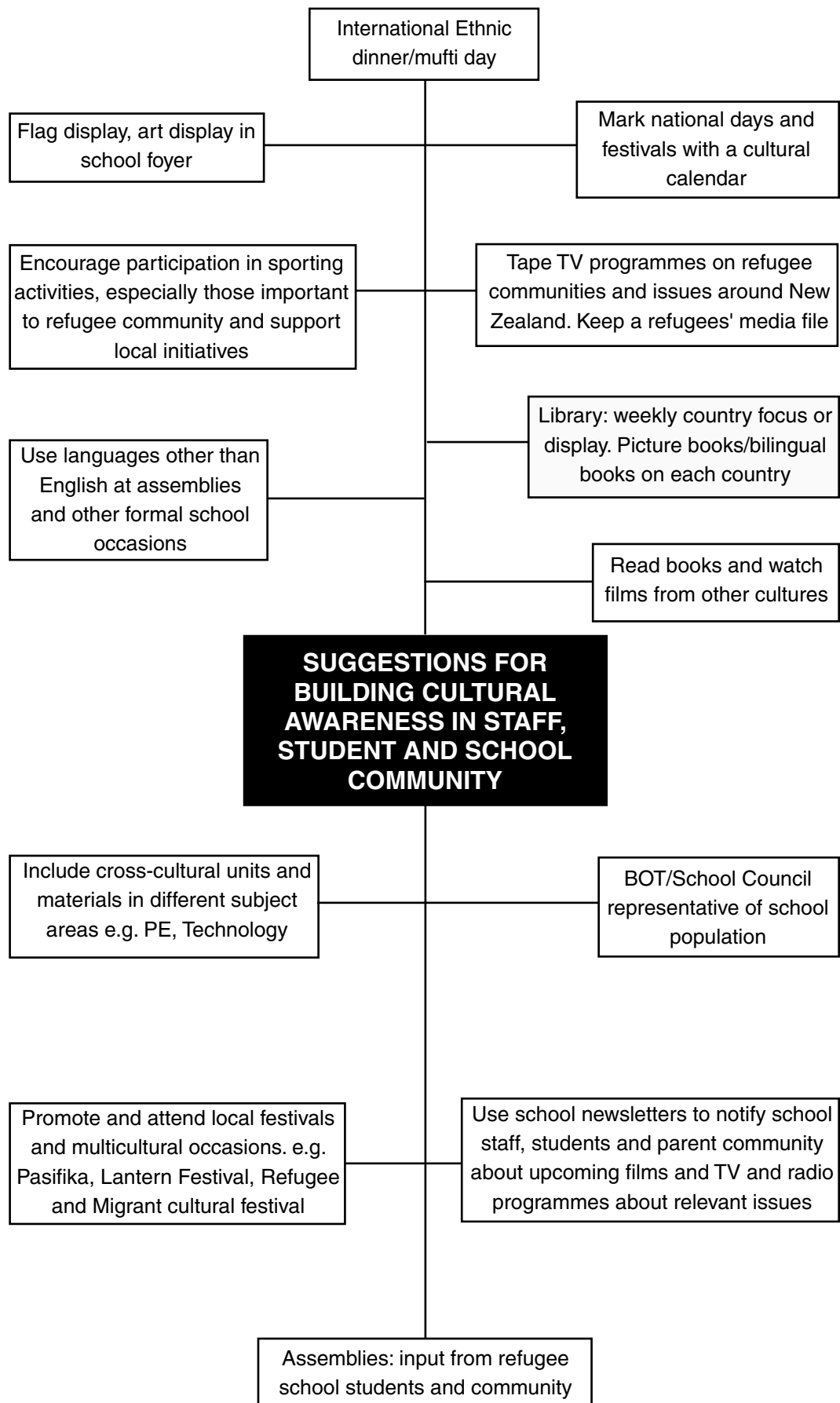
Social Studies texts

School Journals

Internet Sites

Further information on developing and using Ethnic Boxes can be found in the *NESB Students: A Handbook for Schools* pages 34-35, in the ESOL Information folder.

For assistance in developing an Ethnic Box, contact your local ESOL adviser at the School Support Services (see ESOL information sheet)



Adult learning options

There are some mechanisms for enrolling adult learners at schools in day classes, and some adult students may be eligible for ESOL / Refugee student funding. Schools wishing to enrol adult refugee learners should contact the Refugee Education Co-ordinator for guidance.

In providing language programmes for parents of students from a refugee background, many schools have tapped into unexpected benefits. These can include:

- a levelling influence on school behaviour with the presence of adult role models
- a rich resource that subject teachers can use; refugee adults can be invited to speak to their classes on relevant topics or take small groups on issues they are studying
- a heightened awareness of the multicultural nature of the school and adult input into multicultural events and cultural clubs
- the ability to offer the adults paid employment for interpretation and translation needs at the school
- help in setting up structures for religious observances
- the benefits of parents becoming actively involved in their children's education

ESOL Advisors for adult learners are located in various regions. They assess, refer and link adults to appropriate provision.

AUCKLAND REGION

Auckland Regional Migrant Resource Centre

Three Kings Plaza, 532 Mt Albert Road, Three Kings

Phone: 09 625 3094

Website: www.arms-mrc.org.nz

Email: esolauckland@arms-mrc.org.nz

Manukau Migrant Resource Centre

6 Osterley Way (opposite the ANZ Bank), Manukau City

Phone: 09 263 5490

Website: www.arms-mrc.org.nz

Email: esolmanukau@arms-mrc.org.nz

WAIKATO REGION

Waikato Migrant Resource Centre

Boundary Road, Hamilton East

Phone: 07 853 2196

Email: esol.advisor@xtra.co.nz

WELLINGTON REGION

The Multicultural Centre

Level 1, 61-63 Taranaki Street, Wellington

Phone: 04 384 8618

Email: esol.specialist@xtra.co.nz

Te Awakairangi Community Resource Centre

Corner of Laings Road, and Myrtle Street, Lower Hutt

Phone: 027 494 0045

Email: huttisol.specialist@xtra.co.nz

CHRISTCHURCH REGION

The Refugee and Migrant Centre

Lancaster House, 323 Madras Street, Christchurch

Phone: 03 366 8254

Email: esol.advice@xtra.co.nz

Sources of greetings and cultural information

Publications

- *New to New Zealand* is a booklet of background information on many different ethnic groups in New Zealand. It is jointly published by the Hamilton City Council and the ESOL advisors and is available through the Ministry of Education.
- *Effective Provisions for Students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English* (Jannie van Hees) is available from Teachers' Centres.
- The ESOL Home Tutor Association has charts of multilingual greetings and cards of basic phrases in many languages for sale.
- There are many websites with cultural information and greetings in a variety of languages.

Organisations

- The Refugee Education Co-ordinators at the Ministry of Education can assist schools in sourcing community members to provide information on greetings.